Environment clearance of constructions in Sabarimala

223. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is pending with Government seeking environmental clearance for the projects of constructions or retaining walls, queue complexes, parking facilities, latrine blocks etc. in Sabarimala;

(b) whether Government accorded clearance for the project; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA):(a) The Central Government has received six proposals only for diversion of forest land under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for construction of irrigation components in Pampa and Kakki rivers, retaining walls, latrine* blocks, bath rooms, Sewage Treatment Plant, resting place, pathway, etc. in Sabarimala.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Out of these six proposals, information in respect of the project relating to the irrigation components in Pampa and Kakki rivers is incomplete. For the remaining five proposals, the State Government has not obtained prior permission of the National Board of Wildlife and the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India for diversion of forest land for these projects as the forest land to be diverted falls in the Periyar Tiger Reserve.

Environment clearance to development Projects

224. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to formulate a new procedure for granting environment clearance to development projects;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some of the States are opposed to these reforms;

(c) if so, the details of objections of these individual States; and

(d) the action plan of the Centre to resolve the issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA):(a) The Government has undertaken a comprehensive review of existing environmental clearance process, formulated a revised procedure, and initiated consultations with all the concerned stakeholders on the proposed revised procedure.

(b) and (c) During the meetings with the State Governments, some of the States have suggested certain changes in the proposed revised procedure. The important changes suggested include:

- More decentralization of powers for granting environmental clearance to the State Governments.
- Public hearing should not be conducted by the project proponent.
- Clear lists of projects -requiring environmental clearance at Central and State levels.

(d) Any change in the existing environmental clearance process will be brought forth only after following the due statutory procedure laid down under the relevant Acts/Rules.

Withholding the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

225. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have withheld the release of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to revive the Action Plan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA):(a) and (b) Preparation of NBSAP (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan) has been taken up as a part of India's commitment under the Convention on Biological